



Goblin Fire



fantasy

elf

goblin

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Chapter 1 by Phantim

It was a peaceful time for the Kingdom of Narinfaard and peace had led to complacency.

Tim's muscles burned as he swung his sword up and blocked another blow from a large, gruff man. Tim quickly kicked forward with his left leg and hit the man in the shin. The man let loose a bellowing roar from beneath his bushy, red beard. He was not happy that his attack had been blocked.

"You son of an orc lover!" the bearded man yelled.

Tim only smiled as he twirled his own sword in a counter-clockwise motion which caused the other man to drop his sword.

"Tsk, tsk Matteo," he admonished. "Beaten by the son of an orc lover."

Matteo's frown was difficult to see under his thick beard, but Tim knew it was there nonetheless. The two had been sparring partners for the last several months, ever since Tim had been transferred to the small town as a guard. Tim had been apprenticing under a knight as

a squire for years until his master was slain in battle. Unable to continue that career path, he left the large city that had been his home for all his life for himself in the small countryside town of Bran. He had plenty of time to find another suitable career path.

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"We'll see how good those fancy moves work in a real fight one day, Timortheus," said Matteo. "You find like an elf maiden."

"And what, master Matteo is so bad about that?" A soft trilling voice called from the nearby well. It was Talia, one of the few elves that had chosen to make her home in the human city.

Matteo cheeks flushed a bright red as he turned around and looked at the elf woman. "Oh, Tali, didn't see you there. My apologies, I didn't mean anything by it," he apologized.

"I should hope not," she said. Then she upturned her nose and turned to leave.

Sheathing his sword, Tim ran after her and caught up to her with a few brisk strides.

"Good afternoon lady Talia. Might I walk with you back to the apothecary?" he asked her.

"Oh, I'm not heading there. Magister Koran is off to the capitol this week to buy supplies for the shop. He doesn't yet trust me to run it by myself, so I'm just head home," the elf replied.

"So, that's a yes 'please accompany me'?" Tim teased.

The corners of Talia's lips curled up in a slight smile before she was able to hide any trace of emotion, as was custom for most elves to do, though years living with humans had taken its toll on her stoicism.

"Yes, I suppose you may. If you insist."

"I do," Tim replied.

"I thought you might," she said, almost smiling again.

"Would you let me carry the water for you?" He asked.

"I'm quite capable of carrying a jug of water," she said appearing slightly annoyed. Elf women, were not accustomed to being thought of as inferior to men, unlike their human counterparts.

"I meant no offense milady. Only that your soft, elegant hands are too lovely to be put to brutish labor. I bet you desire thick calluses." Tim upturned his palms to her, showing calluses and scars from his years of training.

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“Well, if you insist,” she said again. “I could make you a salve for that. It would help soften and heal the skin.”

“I’m not sure that would be practical for a swordsman. The blisters were painful enough to get the first time, if I softened my hands up again...” Then he paused and thought about the pleasant prospect of her hand rubbing against his as she gingerly applied the salve. “But, maybe I could give it a try.”

The two continued to walk and chat with each other across the small city that only housed about three hundred citizens, but their houses had been built apart and in an unorganized manner that caused the walk to be longer than it should have been to cross such a small town. When they finally reached her house, she told him to come back tomorrow for the poultice. Tim happily agreed to come back and left with a broad smile on his face. His thoughts were of her the rest of the day until he finally fell asleep back home in his own cot.

Hours later he awoke to the sounds of screaming and the roar of flames. Tim quickly jumped out of bed wearing nothing but a dirty pair of linen breeches. The smell of smoke burned the hairs deep within his nostrils as he took a long breath. Orange flashing lights pierced through the windows of his small wooden home. Then there was a pounding at his door. Quickly pulling on a pair of brown pants and his tall leather boots, Tim ran to the door. The young man threw it open expecting to see one of the townsfolk asking if he would join the bucket brigade and help put out the fire. What greeted him instead were two short goblins with crude spears.

Jumping backward into his house, Tim narrowly dodged the tip of the first goblin’s spear as it poked at him. Then his arm shot out as quick as a snake striking a mouse and grabbed on the shaft of the spear. Tim then jerked the weapon backward, trying to wrench it from the goblin’s disgusting, bulbous hands. Instead of just the spear, the whole goblin was pulled toward him. Reactively, he kicked forward and sent the small goblin flying into the second goblin. The spear was finally made free from the vicious creatures hand and Tim wasted no time in spinning it around and using it to impale the sprawled goblins that were lying on top of each other. They made a bitter wailing shriek as they died. Tim slammed his door shut and barred

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gauntlets as well as his visored helm as they did not require much effort or time to equip. Soon more thumping at his door came as the goblins must have discovered their fallen brethren. This time, he was ready.

Tim kicked open his door and before the goblins even had time to react his sword flashed and two more goblins lay dead at his feet. The rest of the goblins cried out with a fierce hatred and lunged at him with daggers and spears. Tim danced around their attacks with great agility and speed, blocking and parrying the attacks he could not dodge. After a moment of being on the defense, the young warrior felt confident that he had gauged the strength of the remaining four goblins and retaliated with his own series of deadly blows. Soon all but one of the goblins lay on the ground covered in thick blood that shimmered wildly in the fire-light from the burning buildings around town.

“Curse you human!” The goblin shrieked and then lunged at Tim.

The young guardsman smacked the dagger to the side with the back of his armored hand and then drove his own sword deep into the goblins chest. The attack produced a sickening, crunching noise as it shattered the diminutive creature’s ribs and spine. The creature was lifted off of the ground and then thrown down as Tim whipped his sword to the side. Just as he finished Matteo ran around the corner and called to Tim from down the alley.

“Get to the town hall! We’ll be safest there. I’ve already sent most of—” the other guard was cut off mid-sentence as a goblin jumped off the roof of a nearby building and landed on his back. The creature wasted no time as it drove a rugged dagger into the man’s throat sending out a crimson spray of blood. Tim watched helplessly as his friend crumpled to the ground.

“No! Matteo!” he cried out. Then he rushed over and beheaded the goblin who had begun cackling wildly.

Water flooded Tim’s eyes and tightness crept into his throat as he grabbed ahold of Matteo and watched the last bit of life leave the man’s eye. There was no time to waste on the dead though. Tim knew he had to make it to the town hall. If people were fleeing there, the goblins would be

chasing. The town only had twelve fulltime guards and a few militia. If the goblins came in numbers as they usually did, the town would be overwhelmed and all the help they could get

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Thinking about the people who lived in the town hall, Tim felt a pang of sympathy. He thought of the old man who lived in the town hall, the woman who lived on the outskirts of town. A feeling of dread crept into his chest as he thought

about her. Those on the outskirts of town would have been the first hit and the least prepared for the goblin attack. He couldn't only hope that they hadn't come from the south where her home was. Tim let go of Matteo's body and let it slump to the ground as he began running as fast as he could towards Tali's house. He ran into several goblins which he either battled or fled from. He had to take several detours as the burning buildings collapsed around him and blocked the streets of the small city. It was only a matter of minutes before he closed in on her home.

"Durblakis seorna rithus!" He heard a woman's voice call out. Then without warning several goblins ran screaming from within her home clasping hands over their now empty eye sockets.

Hope filled Tim as he heard the voice. She's alive! His joy was short lived however as he burst into Tali's home and saw the elf woman leaning over a table, badly wounded. She looked up at him with fierce eye like she was about to attack before recognition came over her.

"Tim," she gasped.

"Yes. I'm here Tali. You're gonna be okay," he said.

Tali looked at him and smiled like she thought he might be lying.

"I'll protect you, use whatever magic you have left to heal yourself. Or grab a potion from your supplies! I've seen you and the master heal worse wounds than that."

Nodding, she closed her eyes and placed her hands over her wounded stomach which was spurting thick, hot, ropes of crimson blood on the wooden floorboards. Then she began uttering a string of words that were unintelligible to the human warrior.

Even as she chanted a goblin burst the door with his arms full of trinkets and treasures. He was apparently expecting this house to be empty and an easy target for his looting, for he looked at the two of them with wide, fearful eyes. Then the creature shouted "Live ones! Live ones!"

Tim cursed that he had hesitated to kill the creature before he lunged forward and shoved his

sword into the goblin's throat. It gasped and gurgled blood even as its slimy hands loosed and released the treasures from its hold. It amounted of clanking on the floor. More would be coming. Tim should have passed him and make it to Tali. Even with the sword he could defend this single doorway no matter how many came.

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Chapter 2 by -

"Tali?" Tim looked towards her with worry written in his features. "Don't you have a roof escape?"

The Elf maiden stood up, understanding the dire situation. "Yes, come quickly." Tim killed the immediate goblins, and then ran behind Tali to the roof, before the creatures overran the cottage.

He knew the area well, and took Tali's delicate hand into his and helped her to the ground. They ran together towards the town hall.

Yes, that was their only chance. The woods would be infested with goblins, they had to make to the others before---

Above the treetops, Tali and Tim saw smoke engulf the sky as a thunderous boom shook the ground.

Chapter 3 by Jacob Schmittling

"Tim, that direction!" shouted Tali.

"I know, it's the same direction as the Town Hall." he said in a hushed tone as to avoid unwanted attention.

Tali flew past Tim in a hurry. Tim grabbed a hold of Tali, almost throwing her to the ground. Tali turned around in protest about to scream at him but she noticed he was looking away with a single finger pressed tightly against his lips as to signal her to remain quiet. She saw his eyes and could only see horror in them. Then all at once, the looming outline appeared against the dark night.

Its skin was hunter green almost grey like the goblins its eyes shined bright yellow. In its hand sat a massive club spiked on the end. The worst part was the stench of fish that hung in the air

"A Troll?" whispered Tali so quietly. "Take out the words." Tim nodded with a response.

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After about five minutes of waiting the Troll moved on towards the village. "Tim, what is a troll doing out here!" whispered Tali in a shaky tone. "Not sure, but whatever is the reason I can bet the goblins have a hand in it," said Tim trying to sound strong, but even he felt uneasy inside him.

As the troll disappeared into the darkness Tim stood up and grabbed Tali and took off running, trying to flank around the troll to the town hall.

Thirty minutes later they entered the town and could see the hall. "Tim!" Tali's eyes began to water when she saw it. The town hall was in flames. Tim rushed towards the hall, sword in hand.

As he ran he noticed something or someone was there and he stopped, grabbed his sword and shouted: "show yourself!" "Tim!" said a voice from the shadows. "Edward, is that you?" said Tim.

Edward was a town watchman and a good friend of Tim's. He had long blonde hair, that he usually kept pulled back into a ponytail, he was also big but not fat. In fact, one could wager not a bit of fat was on him. He had also excelled at the spear at a young age and was Tim's sparring partner.

"Yea Tim, it's me," said Edward stepping out of the shadows. Just as light hit his face Tim saw the blood running down his face.

"Edward, you're hurt!" shouted Tim in surprise.

"Yea but it's not that bad—a goblin got a lucky swing on me and hit me over the head, knocking me out" responded Edward.

"Can you fight brother? I feel the townspeople are in grave danger" said Tim.

"You know I can, why ask!" said Edward in an almost agitated tone.

As he picked up his spear and shield, Tim took off towards the hall with Tali close at his heels.

As all three of them approached the town hall they heard screaming coming from the burning building. The town watch had been massacred, their bodies lay everywhere around the hall. The hall had chains wrapped around it. Tim and Tali ran to the doors and burst them open and the townspeople poured out thanking them. They gathered behind the wood barrier the watch had

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made and told their story. It seems the goblins chief had locked them in and decided to burn them alive.

Just then, Tali said, "Tim do you smell that?". "Yes," said Tim. The smell was known to him. It was to smell of fish, and as he looked into the shadows and saw the bright yellow eyes shining back at him.

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